

## **Tentative Agenda**

### **Joint Master Plan Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education and the Senate Select Committee on College and University Admissions and Outreach Disparities in Access to Resources: Rigorous Curriculum**

**March 7, 2003, 1:00-4:00 P.M.**

**Preuss School Auditorium, UC San Diego, San Diego, CA**

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|-------------|---|----|
| <b>I.</b>   | <b>Welcome/Call to Order</b><br>Senator Alarcón and members of Select Committee<br>Senator Alpert and members of Joint Committee<br>Doris Alvarez, Principal Preuss School  | 1  |
| <b>II.</b>  | <b>Social/Economic Ramifications of Under-educating California</b><br>David Silver, UC ACCORD, Indicators Project   | 15 |
| <b>III.</b> | <b>What's in the Master Plan: Rigorous Coursework</b><br>Sara Lundquist, Vice-President of Student Services, Santa Ana College  |    |
| <b>IV.</b>  | <b>What are the parameters of what constitutes a rigorous curriculum?</b><br>Russlynn Ali, Executive Director, EdTrustWest<br>Alberto Ochoa, Co-Chair, San Diego County Latino Coalition for Education<br>Granger Ward, the Superintendent of Grossmont Union High School District, AVID<br>Ginger Hovenic, California Businesses for Educational Excellence Foundation<br>Barbara Sawrey, Chair, BOARS, University of California<br>Allison Jones, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Student Academic Support  |    |
| <b>V.</b>   | <b>Access for all Kids: Examples of Career Technical Education/Vocational Education College<br/>Prep. Coursework</b><br>William H. Pickens, President and CEO, Foundation for Educational Achievement<br>Jim Schoning, Executive Director, California Restaurant Association Foundation<br>Dale Matusuno, Home Economist - Lead Instructor, Bell Gardens HS<br>Omar Lopez, Corporation for Public School Education K-16<br>Sharon McKenzie, Vice-President, Home Economic Teachers Association of California<br>California Workforce Investment Board |    |
| <b>VI.</b>  | <b>Public Comment</b>   |    |
| <b>VII.</b> | <b>Conclusion</b><br>Senator Alpert<br>Senator Alarcon  |    |

**Senate Select Committee on College and University Admissions and Outreach  
and the  
Joint Master Plan Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education  
Disparities in Access to Resources: Rigorous Curriculum**

**Purpose**

Last year, the Senate Select Committee on College and University Admissions and Outreach conducted five hearings throughout the state, that culminated in numerous findings and recommendations to improve the quality of access to higher education. In particular, the committee found that California's public education system still exhibits significant disparities in educational access and achievement that correlate to differences in socio-economic class, geographic location, and ethnicity. Further, unequal access to adequate resources, such as college preparatory curriculum, and a proper learning environment negatively affect rates of college eligibility and admissions for students residing in underserved communities. These disparities will affect California's long-term economic health since a skilled and educated workforce, that has access to the many different forms of quality higher education, is vital to the state's economic development.

The 2002 Master Plan recommends that the state ensure that all students have access to an academically rigorous curriculum that allows for a full array of post-high school options. To date, low-income, Latino, African American, rural and other underrepresented students have not had access to such curriculum, which has resulted in low college going rates low rates of participation in high paying jobs. For example, only 4% of Latino and 3% of African American high school graduates are eligible to apply for the University of California.

This hearing will examine the parameters of what constitutes a rigorous curriculum, specifically reviewing the effects that the disparities in access to college preparatory coursework have had on underrepresented populations. The committees will also focus on how to ensure vocational education prepares students for technically skilled positions in the new economy and that vocational or career/technical coursework contains sufficient academic rigor so that students who participate in those courses do not experience a curtailing of their future options.

**Objective**

The focus of the Senate Select Committee on College and University Admissions and Outreach and the Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education is to review the state's commitment to ensuring that all capable and willing students have access to a quality higher education. The committees will examine how comprehensive admissions policies and outreach efforts can promote greater access to higher education for all populations, and in turn, provide an investment in the future of California's economy and improve the quality of life of disenfranchised communities. The committees will highlight the socioeconomic and geographic disparities in college preparation, the different methods of measuring success and eligibility, and the institutions' commitment to developing talent. The committees are addressing these issues by conducting a series of hearings and town hall meetings to create a record that will result in policy recommendations and future legislation.

## **Background**

### **2002 Master Plan**

In 1999 the Legislature passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 29, which created a joint legislative committee to develop a new Master Plan for Education. In September of 2002, the Legislature accepted the new Master Plan for Education with its two primary goals: to provide every family with the information, resources, services, and support it needs to give every child the best possible start in life and in school; and to provide every public school, college and university with the resources and authority necessary to ensure that every student receives a rigorous, high quality education that prepares him/her to become a self initiating, self-sustaining learner for the rest of his/her life

The 2002 Master Plan contains numerous findings and recommendations. Specifically, recommendations 11, and 11.2 are most pertinent for the purposes of the March 7<sup>th</sup> hearing. Those recommendations state the following:

#### ***Recommendation 11***

*The State should set ambitious learning goals and provide all students a challenging and comprehensive PreK-12 curriculum, including preparation for post-secondary education and careers.*

#### ***Recommendation 11.2***

*The State should establish a standard, academically rigorous curriculum for every high school student. This curriculum should make available career and technical courses, so that every student can be aware of and prepared for, a full array of post-high school options. The State should provide the learning support necessary, including resources for career guidance and assistance, to enable students to successfully complete this postsecondary readiness curriculum.*

The Joint Master Plan Committee intends to implement recommendations contained in the Plan through various efforts, such as implementing legislation, constitutional amendments, budget control language, resolutions, studies and expanded partnerships. Recommendations 11 and 11.2 would be implemented through the Student Learning Omnibus Bill (Senate Bill 550).

### **A-G Coursework**

To date, a postsecondary education readiness curriculum in California has not been defined in statute or other comprehensive state policy applying to all high schools or to all students. Rather, that concept has been synonymous with the coursework requirements necessary to apply to California's public 4-year institutions, the University of California and the California State University—the A-G coursework. The coursework is defined by those institutions as follows:

- A History / Social Science** -Two years required, including one year of U.S. history or one-half year of U.S. history and one-half year of civics or American Government; **and** one year of

world history, cultures, and geography.

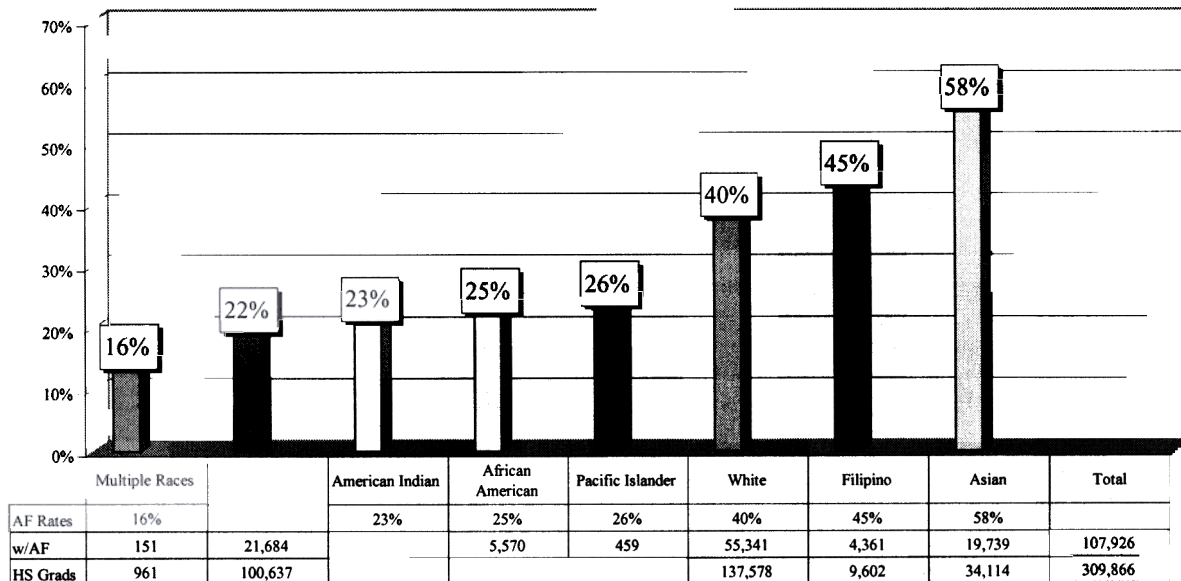
- B English** -Four years of college preparatory English that include frequent and regular writing, and reading of classic and modern literature.
- C Mathematics** - Three years of college preparatory mathematics that include the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry.
- D Laboratory Science** -Two years of laboratory science providing fundamental knowledge in at least two of these three disciplines: biology (which includes anatomy, physiology, marine biology, aquatic biology, etc.), chemistry, and physics.
- E Language other than English** - Two years of the same language other than English
- F Visual & Performing Arts** - One year, including dance, drama/theater, music, and/or visual art
- G College Preparatory Elective** - In addition to those courses required above, one year (two semesters) of college preparatory electives are required, chosen from visual and performing arts, history, social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science, and language other than English.

This “A-G” coursework is used as the de facto college preparatory coursework since it is required for admission by the UC and CSU system.

Although there is no statutory acceptance of the “A-G” coursework as indicative of college preparation, the clear identification of this course pattern as a prerequisite for admission allows state policy-makers to examine the opportunities for and outcomes of students across the state with respect to postsecondary access. Policy-makers can measure the number of students that would meet the coursework eligibility standards in order to apply to a 4-year public institution in California, and thereby assess at least one aspect of educational equity. (See Figure 1) The data highlights the disparity in access to the A-G coursework – and therefore, barriers to a 4-year postsecondary education: 40% of White students meet the A-G requirements, as contrasted with only 22% of Latinos and 25% of African Americans.

At the same time, the new Master Plan for Education does not automatically accept the “A-G” pattern as constituting a “rigorous” or “college preparatory” curriculum that should be provided to every student, but rather it begins a state-level dialogue about what should constitute a high quality, rigorous curriculum that will prepare all students to be successful in either work or continued education at the postsecondary level.

**Figure 1. High School Graduates Meeting the Required Courses for the University  
(UC/CSU), 1999-2000**



### Vocational/Career Technical Programs

The A-G coursework pattern does not have a vocational education/career technical component, and deliberations of the Master Plan committee suggest that all students should have exposure to educational experiences that are offered in the context of occupational opportunities. While a small number of vocational programs are accepted as A-G courses, the vast majority of courses are not. This latter fact stems from a judgement by the universities that the academic rigor of most vocational or career/technical courses is insufficient to ensure that students who participate in them are receiving the academic preparation necessary to allow them to be successful in college or university settings. The result of this judgement – and of the level of rigor of those courses – is that students who take career-oriented courses to prepare themselves for success in the workplace may preclude themselves from pursuing a baccalaureate degree without first taking additional high-school level instruction.

The Master Plan proposes that this curtailing of students' options must be eliminated. The Plan calls for the enhancement of the academic rigor of those courses so that more of them can be accepted by universities in evaluating eligibility and that they will, in fact, impart to students the knowledge needed to be successful in postsecondary study as well as in the workplace.

The Department of Education and the California Community Colleges have taken the first steps toward bridging the divide between academic and career education, by developing the 2000-2004 California State Plan for Vocational Education. That document states in part that:

***"The success of vocational and technical education is clearly linked to the larger question of how students prepare for life as productive, self sufficient workers, contributing citizens, successful family members, and lifelong learners....California urgently needs to develop a larger plan for vocational and technical education that extends beyond the specifics of funding program improvements to a visionary plan for how vocational and technical education can contribute to California's economic future."***

In addition, the report states:

***"All students—not just a select group bound for baccalaureate degrees—should gain advanced literacy and mathematics skills as well as sophisticated technical competencies."***

## **Employers**

The National Economic Development and Law Center states that California's domestic and global market is changing, and our education and training system must keep up. The Center reports the following:

- Forty years ago, **80%** of workers could get a job without a college education; today, over half of workers require some college to secure a job;
- Over the next four years, **70%** of new jobs created will require advanced/superior skills or competent skills (equivalent to having some post-secondary education or a Bachelor's degree). Only 20% of new jobs will be in the basic skill range (e.g. a below-average high school graduate) and a mere 10% of jobs will be available for those with minimal skills (e.g. those with no high school diploma);
- **82%** of the largest chambers of commerce reported that workforce and education issues were their member's number one priority; and

In a Survey by the National Association of Manufacturers of its member firms, **90%** reported difficulty in finding qualified candidates in at least one job function.

In addition the Employment Development Department (EDD) projects the following:

- Business services and retail trade will account for more than one-third (33%) of the increases in jobs;
- Health services and local education will make up an additional 16% of the increase in employment;
- The largest declines in employment will be in depository institutions and manufacturers of transportation equipment, excluding motor vehicles;

- The leaders in percentage gains of employment will be manufacturers of computer and office equipment (69%), business services (66%), social services(46%), and trucking and warehousing businesses(44%); and
- The industries demonstrating the largest declines in employment are manufactures of glassware (-38.3%), hydraulic cement (-37.5%) and metal cans and shipping containers (-37.5%).

The 200-2004 California State Plan for Vocational Education, states that:

*“overall, the changes in work organizations and technology will make frontline workers responsible for operational improvement, problem solving, and quality control. Workers will have to work “smarter” and apply advanced computation and communication skills. This new set of skill blends what have traditionally been separate academic and vocational competencies.”*

The foregoing quote from the 2000-2004 California State Plan for Vocational Education underscores the commitment of these committees that California cannot continue an “either-or” approach to educating students. We must ensure that public schools prepare all students with the knowledge and skills to be successful in the workplace as well as in a college or university setting.

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